Whenever OMCs receive complaints, these are investigated and if the complaint is established, suitable action is taken against the LPG distributor (s) in accordance with the provisions of the MDG. MDG provides for following action against the distributors:—

— Fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 1st offence.

— Fine of Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 2nd offence.

— Termination of the distributorship for 3rd offence.

In addition to the action taken by the OMCs, State Government are empowered under the LPG (Regulation of Supply & Distribution) Order, 2000 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to take action against blackmarketing of domestic LPG. Similarly, the Weights and Measures Departments of the States/UTs initiate legal action against those LPG distributors found supplying under-weight LPG cylinders. The State Governments have been alerted from time to time to take steps against the black-marketing of domestic cylinders for unauthorized usage.

Government have issued advertisements cautioning the public that use of domestic LPG for non-domestic purposes is illegal, dangerous and against national interest. Through these advertisements, cooperation of the general public is also sought to report any irregularity/ malpractice to the OMCs.

The officials of OMCs carry out checks at distributor's godowns, delivery points, as well as en-route to ensure that no pilferage takes place. The distributors of OMCs are under strict instructions to check the weight of cylinders at their godowns before delivery, and only cylinders with the specified weight are to be delivered to the customers. The distributors have also been instructed to ensure that the seals are verified and shown to the customers at the time of delivery. In case any under-weight cylinder is received by the customer, such cylinders are replaced free of charge by the OMCs.

Use of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purpose

3058. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the practice of diverting LPG cylinders for domestic consumption to commercial use continues in the country unabated, particularly in big cities;

(b) if so, the number of such cases detected in big cities during 2007, city-wise; and

(c) the action taken against the gas agencies and the delivery personnel involved in this malpractice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) The possibility of diversion of subsidized domestic LPG cylinders by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to the wide gap between the retail price of LPG for domestic use and the market price for commercial LPG.

(b) During the year 2007, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have detected 373 cases of diversion of domestic LPG cylinders in the country. The city-wise details are available with the Directors (Marketing) of the concerned OMCs.

(c) Action against the erring distributors was taken as per provisions of Marketing Guidelines (MDG)/Distributorship Agreements (DA) by the OMCs.

In order to stop diversion of domestic LPG cylinders, the Government has enacted "Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000" and formulated "Marketing Discipline Guidelines, 2001" which provides for penal action against LPG distributors indulging in diversion of LPG.

Whenever OMCs receive complaints, these are investigated and if the complaint is established, suitable action is taken against the LPG distributor (s) in accordance with the provisions of the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG). MDG provides for following action against the distributor:—

— Fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 1st offence.

— Fine of Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commerical rates for 2nd offence.

— Termination of the distributorship for 3rd offence.

In addition to the action taken by the OMCs State Governments are empowered under the LPG (Regulation of Supply & Distribution) Order, 2000 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to take action against diversion of domestic LPG. Similarly, the Weights and Measures Departments of the States/UTs initiate legal action against those LPG distributors diverting LPG cylinders. The State Governments have been alerted from time to time to take steps against the diversion of domestic cylinders for unauthorized usage.

Government have issued advertisements cautioning the public that use of domestic LPG for non-domestic purposes is illegal, dangerous and against national interest. Through these advertisements, cooperation of the general public has also been sought to report any irregularity/malpractice to the OMCs.

The officials of OMCs carry out random checks at distributors godowns, delivery points, as well as en-route to ensure that no misuse takes place. The distributors of OMCs are under strict instructions to check the weight of cylinders at their godowns before delivery, and only cylinders with the specified weight are to be delivered to the customers. The distributors have also been instructed to ensure that the seals are verified and shown to the customers at the time of delivery. In case any under-weight cylinder is received by the customer, such cylinders are replaced free of charge by the OMCs.

Exploration in Ganga basin

3059. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has conducted any survey to explore the possibility of Oil and Natural Gas in the States situated in Ganga Basin;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, State-wise; and

(c) by when the exploration is likely to be started from these reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes Sir, Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) technical arm under this Ministry has conducted Geoscientific surveys in Ganga Basin. The aeromagnetic surveys carried out by DGH during last three years are as under: